Social Host

What is a Social Host?
A social host is any person who owns or has control of private property and hosts or allows a party on the property without taking reasonable steps to prevent the use of alcoholic drinks, marijuana, and/or other controlled substances by youth under the age of 21. Youth 18 years of age and older can be considered a “social host” and face legal charges.

Legal Charges
Anyone who violates Escondido’s Social Host Ordinance could face the following consequences:

- A fine of $1,000
- A minimum of 24 hours of community service
- 6 months to 1 year in jail
- Responsible for any injuries by third parties as a result of a minor guest’s actions
- Responsible for costs of enforcement services in response to such a party

Know the law!
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Know your responsibilities as host:

- Control Access – keep alcohol away from minors at your party.
- Control Quantity – Don’t buy so much you lose track of who has what.
- Verify Age – You have a responsibility to know how old everyone is at your party.
- Supervise – You MUST supervise the activities of minors in attendance and ensure they’re NOT drinking.

Have a Safe Teenage Party:

- No smoking, No drugs, No alcohol.
- No uninvited guests.
- Youth not to leave the party & returning without adult permission and supervision.
- Party area should have good lighting.
- Parent will be providing supervision by serving refreshments, etc.
- Make some rooms in your home off limits to guests.
- Lock up all forms of alcohol, prescription drugs, firearms and other dangerous items in a safe place.
- If you think a teen guest has been using a controlled substance, contact their parents.
- Ask all uninvited guests to leave right away. Call the police to remove unwanted guests.

FAQ

If all kids are going to drink anyway, Isn’t it better to “take the keys” and provide them a safe environment?

No. Driving drunk is not the only negative outcome of underage drinking. Drinking parties often involve binge drinking (5 or more drinks on one occasion) which greatly increases the risk of alcohol poisoning, accidents and injury, motor vehicle crashes, mixing alcohol with other drugs, violence, sexual abuse and the practice of unsafe and unprotected sex.

If my child is arrested and found guilty, will this appear on his/her permanent record?

Anyone over the age of 18 found guilty of being a social host will face charges that will go on their criminal record.

Can a parent be criminally charged if the parent allows their child to consume alcohol in the privacy of their own home?

A parent cannot be charged under the Escondido Social Host Ordinance if, in their presence, they allow their underage child to consume alcohol in their residence. However, allowing someone else’s child to consume alcohol in your home is illegal.